

remained under the conscientious surveillance of an alienist or in the kindly shelter of an hospital for the insane. It is scarcely astonishing that Dr. Boyd, who lately met with so melancholy a fate, should protest against the procedures of the Earl of Shaftesbury's commission as injurious to the best interests of science and the insane. The scientific alienist is the best friend of the insane, and any dilettante philanthropy which thwarts his efforts is a curse to science and humanity. Dilettante philanthropy has practically emasculated English psychiatry, and the ultimate object of the same now appears to be directed to the comfort of the insane in the spoiled-child sense rather than cure. Dr. Godding well says : " In the temple of psychiatry to-day modern philanthropy writes over all this inscription : ' He opened the doors. He broke the chains,' " and says there is no higher line than that. But the humanity of another age will write above it : " And they brought unto him those who were lunatics, and he *healed* them."

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#### HALF-TRUTHS ON THE WITNESS-STAND.

IT cannot be denied that a spirit of partisanship too often enters into expert investigation ; while this is to be regretted, it is necessarily unavoidable, from the nature of things, when the physician, from at first hearing only one side of the case, unconsciously acquires a bias from which he is afterward unable to rid himself. While some of the differences in expert testimony are to be referred to this cause, the great differences arise from a different state of things. Dr. H. B. Wilbur, a short time before his death, said : " Expert testimony should be the colorless light of science brought to bear upon any case where it is summoned. It should be impartial, unprejudiced. There should be no half-truths uttered ; and suppression of the whole truth is in the nature of false testimony." It is to this last circumstance that the great evils of expert testimony are to be referred. The expert does not state the whole truth of science on the subject, but only such phases as fit the case. In the Laros case, for example,

the expert for the prosecution, being asked to describe epilepsy, described the *grand mal* only, and reference to the *petit mal* had to be drawn out of him by rigid cross-examination. In an Illinois case one expert for the prosecution acted in just the same way; and another, on being asked if an epileptic could remain in contact with other men for months without being suspected, replied that he could not; on cross-examination it was found that he meant, although he did not so state, only that *grand mal* could not escape detection under such circumstances. Now, whether the diagnosis of these experts was correct or not, such statements cannot be regarded other than as the utterance of half-truths, and for these there is no excuse. Experts may honestly differ as to diagnoses, but such difference does not justify the suppression of well-established facts in science. Here is the great source of distrust of expert testimony, and one of the reasons for its contradictory nature. For such testimony there is, under the existing state of things, one remedy—the scientific physician should assist the lawyer to cross-examine the opposing expert on the fundamental principles of science. Such a course will not be objected to by any honest expert, and is doubly called for in the case of dishonest experts. It will make cross-examination an excellent means of eliciting truth. No respectable expert will aid an attorney in badgering another; but cross-examination as to knowledge of the principles of science is a very different thing.

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#### RETROGRADE PROGRESS.

IT is stated that it has been determined to strike psychiatry from the list of subjects required in the German State's examination. From this it is evident that the so-called "practical" spirit is beginning to dominate the German mind. The present system of examination has not imbued the average German physician with an enormous knowledge of psychiatry, since a German railroad physician testified in a recent case that a patient who presented all the physical and some of the mental symptoms of parietic dementia was, although but forty-three years old, suffering